

## **CROSS CREEK STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION REZONING AND SPECIAL EXCEPTION APPLICATIONS**

**APRIL, 2007  
Revised May 2007**

### **INTRODUCTION**

**Cross Creek** is proposed as a major shopping center for the New Baltimore Service District. It encompasses approximately 39 acres in the “commercial core” of New Baltimore. The Property has approximately 31 acres zoned C-2 and the remaining ±8 acres are zoned R-1. The first Phase of development; approximately 25 acres, encompasses the proposed Costco site and ancillary retail along the east side of Cross Creek Drive. The proposed Special Exception encompasses the proposed Costco site, a Costco signage request and the ultimate commercial square footage proposed for Cross Creek. The Rezoning application is proposing to rezone approximately 8.5 acres along Broad Run Church Road (Route 600) from R-1 to C-2.

### **Rezoning Request**

In keeping with the recently adopted New Baltimore Service District Land Use Plan this C-2 rezoning request is proposing to develop its Route 600 frontage with low-scale, neighborhood-styled building facades serving commercial uses. Specific design elements that complement and provide this land use character include but are not exclusive to: (i) all commercial uses are proposed for access internal to Cross Creek, (ii) building heights are limited to 35 feet, (iii) no “drive-thru” operations are proposed for this rezoned area, (iv) all building sizes are less than 12,500 square feet with three of the four buildings illustrated on the CDP encompassing only 6,400 square feet each in size, (v) extensive landscape treatment between the commercial uses and Route 600; and, (vi) loading drive aisles have been limited to only one building.

As referenced above, these small buildings will have distinctive designs (xxxxx brick facades and gable roof lines) yet maintain a common architectural style throughout the proposed neighborhood center. Additionally, the proposed landscaping, streetscape and pedestrian seating areas associated with these buildings will promote a very positive human scale environment for a variety of users. This commitment to such a high quality of design and sensitivity to details will significantly reduce the bulk and massing of buildings along Route 600. The resultant effect will be an interesting background of soft architectural elements inter-mingled with a fabric of buffering/landscaping and a pedestrian system, which will effectively minimize any visual impacts along this local neighborhood corridor.

All of these design elements are further supported with the broad and diverse 30 foot landscape buffer along Route 600. This landscaping theme will establish a very positive image for the motorist on Route 600 and serve as an important keystone for upgrading the visual character along this local collector. Accordingly, this Rezoning proposal will provide an excellent opportunity for the County to broaden its tax base in a comprehensive and thoughtful manner by providing an effective transitional land use between the more intense Cross Creek commercial uses and the existing residential uses along Route 600.

### **Special Exception Requests**

Cross Creek, as the largest contiguous commercially zoned property in New Baltimore, is requesting two (2) special exceptions ("SE") with its subject application. These requests include: (i) permitting a shopping center with more than 50,000 SF (the total proposed commercial development would be approximately 255,000 S.F.); and, (ii) permitting additional signage for Costco.

#### **Signage SE**

The additional signage request for the Costco site is to address a currently "out-of-date" restriction for such large retail establishments. Currently, the Zoning Ordinance limits these establishments to a total signage area of 150 square feet. This limited amount of signage seriously impacts the viability of such large retail establishments. Consequently, the County has initiated a Zoning Ordinance Amendment to address this signage issue.

The proposed Costco signage is an important element in the building's architecture. Just as building materials and panel colors establish a statement of quality at Costco, its signage, which is predominantly the Company's logo, plays a very important part in the complete Costco package. All of the Costco signs are properly designed and scaled to be in balance with its building facade. Further, Costco does not incorporate free standing signs or building-mounted message signs on its facade. The resultant effect is a very clean and effective message to its customers, the community and motoring public. Accordingly, the special exception filed herein is consistent with the staff-proposed Sign Amendment.

#### **Shopping Center SE**

The Costco portion of Cross Creek is currently zoned C-2 (Highway Commercial). According to the County's Zoning Ordinance, this zoning designation "is designed primarily to allow highway related commercial uses where vehicle access is the norm". Further, this zoning is identified for "general commercial establishments serving the needs of the motoring public and the local needs for general commercial in which establishments are automobile oriented or are freestanding businesses where automobile access is the norm". Both of these zoning descriptions are embodied in the Commercial

Business category of the New Baltimore Service District Plan which encompasses the Costco site.

In keeping with the Commercial Business guidelines for Costco and Cross Creek's related shopping center services, these C-2 commercial uses encompass the "commercial core" of New Baltimore as presented in the Land Use Plan and, as recommend in the Plan, are oriented toward Cross Creek Drive and Route 15/29. This orientation and related access management has been coordinated with the County and VDOT staff for over 2 years. {As a side-bar, the "signature set" Site Plan for Cross Creek Drive is being finalized to be filed with the County.}

Although there will be a common architectural style and pedestrian linkages between the shopping center and the Route 600 neighborhood retail uses, this portion of Cross Creek will be oriented more towards the larger commercial uses. Such a diversity of commercial uses between Route 600 and Route 15/29 will provide an excellent transition between "highway commercial" uses near Route 15/29 and the lower scale neighborhood retail uses recommended along Route 600. It is envisioned that such a diversity of commercial land uses will promote excellent retail service opportunities for local County shoppers and further encourage the positive redevelopment of quality commercial uses along Route 15/29.

With respect to the no big box store referenced in the New Baltimore Plan, it is important to provide some context to this objective. First, this prohibition is only referenced for "local retail at Vint Hill and neighborhood business uses"; it is silent with respect to the Commercial Business designation. Second, a big box store is exactly the type of commercial use that best promotes the County's objectives for Commercial Business which is to provide for the "needs of both the local community and the motoring public". This is the primary land use objective for this Plan designation.

The other significant feature associated with the shopping center SE request is the establishment of four (4) drive-through facilities. The proposed drive-through uses may include several retail users including, a fast food restaurant, a financial institution, a drugstore, coffee shop, donut shop or other similar retail uses. However, all of these drive-through uses will be located outside of the area proposed for neighborhood retail along Route 600.

These uses, in conjunction with the proposed neighborhood commercial uses presented herein, will form the Cross Creek Shopping Center. It is apparent that the diversity of commercial uses planned at Cross Creek fully satisfies the County's major planning objectives for New Baltimore.

With respect to transportation issues and economic benefits, Cross Creek offers the following points:

1. The projected traffic trips with the proposed Cross Creek/Costco development would be considerably less than if Cross Creek

developed without Costco. As an example, Cross Creek could easily adjust its existing 13 lots through the County's boundary line adjustment process and create 5 large lots which could support 49,900 SF of "by-right" commercial development or 249,500 square feet of total commercial uses without any governmental controls on design or mitigation of impacts. The traffic volumes with this "by-right" development could exceed the Cross Creek/Costco projected traffic numbers by over 6,000 vpd and increase daily trips in the New Baltimore network by over 25 %. Further, these trips would increase AM and PM peak trips by approximately another 1,000 vehicles more than currently projected with Costco.

2. The projected revenue with the proposed Cross Creek/Costco development is very substantial. Specifically, at the 10 year anniversary of Cross Creek the total net fiscal impact to the County is projected to be approximately **\$16 MILLION**. More importantly, by the fourth year of operation, it is projected that Cross Creek/Costco will be contributing over **\$2 MILLION** of net revenues annually to the County's budget.

### **Cross Creek/Costco Energy Efficient and Sustainable Design Elements**

In order to promulgate energy efficiency and sustainable design elements, Cross Creek/Costco has identified several design elements that would improve their respective energy efficiency. With respect to the Costco facility, the following is a partial list of the sustainable design measures that will be utilized: (i) computerized HVAC management system, (ii) interior and exterior lighting will be managed and controlled through a combination of skylights, photo sensors and time clocks; respectively, (iii) incorporation of a "white roof" to reduce a heat island effect; and, (iv) extensive recycling/reuse program (including avoidance of using plastic shopping bags).

Similar sustainable design measures will be included in the balance of the buildings at Cross Creek. In addition, it is anticipated that Cross Creek will incorporate the following sustainable design measures with its site development design: (i) comprehensive erosion and sediment control measures and stormwater management controls to minimize off-site impacts, (ii) a shared parking program to minimize impervious surfaces, (iii) an integrated pedestrian system, including bicycle racks; and, (iv) an efficient, non-irrigated, landscaping plan predominately based on utilizing native materials.

**In summary**, Cross Creek/Costco has formed a partnership to provide Fauquier County residents with a diversity of energy efficient commercial uses and services. It is apparent that the benefits of such a high-quality design, including energy efficient and sustainable design measures, in conjunction with the transportation improvements programmed for this project and the exceptional community fiscal attributes associated with this partnership, provide a unique opportunity for Fauquier County to grow its commercial tax base while reducing the tax burden to its residents. Equally important, the Cross Creek/Costco partnership permits the “keystone” to be laid for follow-on high-quality and productive commercial development and uses in New Baltimore.

Respectively submitted.  
Cross Creek Investments, LLC

## **JUSTIFICATION: COSTCO SIGNAGE**

### **Background**

The additional signage request for the Costco site is to address a heretofore County-wide sign problem for large single retail establishments. Until recently, the County's sign ordinance limited signage for a single retail user to 150 square feet. This limited amount of signage seriously impacted the marketing of large retail establishments in the County's major transportation corridors. The County's recent adoption of a new sign ordinance for large retail centers should effectively address this marketing issue.

### **Sign Proposal**

The proposed Costco signage is an important element in Costco's building architecture. Just as building materials and panel colors establish a statement of quality at Costco, its signage, which is predominantly the Company's logo, plays a very important part in the complete Costco architectural package. All of the Costco signs are properly designed and scaled to be in balance with its building facade. For example, its proposed building mounted sign along its north and west building elevations would be approximately 223 square feet. This amount of signage represents less than 3 % of the building square footage for these elevations. The signage proposed for the Costco canopy and Tire Center represents even less visual massing than the building mounted signs. No signage is proposed along its southern elevation, which is adjacent to residentially zoned land. The specific amount of signage proposed for Costco is attached as Exhibit A.

Additional design features associated with these signs are that they will have only indirect lighting; no internally lighted components will be permitted. Further, Costco does not permit any outdoor advertising such as free standing signs or building-mounted message signs on its facade. The resultant effect is a very clean and effective message to its customers, the community and motoring public. Satisfying all three of these marketing objectives are critical factors for a successful Costco store. And finally, the limited visual intrusion of these proposed Costco signs would have no negative impact on adjacent properties. Accordingly, the special exception filed herein is consistent with the recently approved sign ordinance for large retail establishments.

## EXHIBIT A

### COSTCO SIGNAGE AREA TABULATION (WALL SIGNS)

LETTER METHOD					
SIGN	DETAIL	SIZE	AREA (S.F.) EA.	NUMBER OF SIGNS	TOTAL S.F.
COSTCO WHOLESALE	10-DD3.1-01	7' "C"	222.74 S.F.	2	445.48 S.F.
COSTCO WHOLESALE	8-DD3.1-01	4' "C"	73.06 S.F.	2	146.12 S.F.
TIRE CENTER	9-DD3.1-01	17'-4" x 1'-9"	9.92 S.F.	1	9.92 S.F.
BUILDING TOTAL SIGNAGE AREA					601.52 S.F.
COSTCO GASOLINE	4-DD4.2-01	1'-4" x 16'-0"	18.38 S.F.	4	73.52 S.F.
GAS STATION TOTAL SIGNAGE AREA					73.52 S.F.
TOTAL BUILDING AND GAS STATION SIGNAGE AREA					675.04 S.F.

June 26, 2007